

Indicator 15: Workers Employed in Occupations with High Risk for Occupational Morbidity

Significanceⁱ

In 2008, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported an estimated 1.1 million injuries and illnesses that resulted in days away from work, a rate of 113.1 “days away from work” cases per 10,000 full-time-equivalent workers. The risks of these injuries and illnesses are higher in certain occupations. In 2008, 61 occupations had injury and illness rates that were at least double the national average at 226.2 cases per 10,000 full-time-equivalent workers. For tracking the Occupational Health Indicators, these industries have been designated as high-risk for occupational morbidity. Examples include police and correctional officers, nurses and other healthcare workers, housekeeping and janitorial staff, carpenters and other construction workers, bus and taxi drivers and certain types of manufacturing employees.ⁱⁱ

Methods

These data were collected from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Current Population Survey (CPS) using the DataFerrett application, software that allows data queries for specific industry and occupation codes. (<http://dataferrett.census.gov>)

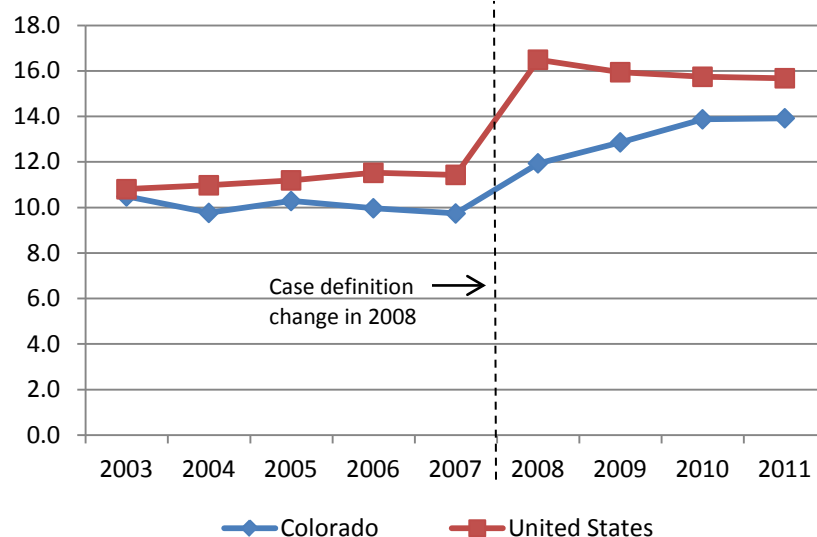
The list of high-risk occupations is updated by the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE) every five years and specifies census occupation codes for employed persons age 16 or older in Colorado and the United States. This list was most recently updated for collection of 2008-2012 data.

ⁱ Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists. *Occupational Health Indicators: A Guide for Tracking Occupational Health Conditions and Their Determinants*. Last updated April 2012.

ⁱⁱ The complete list is available in the CSTE’s May 2011 Update to the *Occupational Health Indicators: A Guide for Tracking Occupational Health Conditions and Their Determinants*.

Results

Figure 15.1 Annual percentage of workers employed in occupations with high risk for morbidity, Colorado and the United States, 2003-2011*



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics Current Population Survey (CPS) (numerator and denominator)

*2008-2011 data collected according to an updated list of high-risk industries and are not comparable to prior years

Table 15.1 Percentage of Workers Employed in Occupations with High Risk for Occupational Morbidity, Colorado and US, 2003-2011*

Year	Colorado	United States
2003	10.5	10.8
2004	9.8	11.0
2005	10.3	11.2
2006	10.0	11.5
2007	9.7	11.4
Average 2001-2007	10.0	11.2
2008	11.9	16.5
2009	12.9	15.9
2010	13.9	15.7
2011	13.9	15.7
Average 2008-2011	13.1	16.0

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics Current Population Survey (CPS) (numerator and denominator)

*2008-2011 data collected according to an updated list of high-risk industries and are not comparable to prior years

Limitations

- The ranking of high-risk occupations may differ by region, state and/or industry.
- Estimates are based on a probability sample of private sector employers and do not include all employers.
- Estimates are based on injury and illness data maintained by employers and are subject to sampling error.
- Estimates do not include the military, small farms and Federal agencies.

Recommendations and Next Steps

- Using available data from the BLS, describe employment by high-risk industry regionally in Colorado to identify potential opportunities for outreach, education and prevention activities.
- Investigate methods to identify Colorado-specific high-risk occupations, which may be different from high-risk occupations defined with national injury/illness statistics. This will help target occupational morbidity prevention efforts.